

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

- 1-14. (Canceled)
15. (Currently amended) A process for the dry impregnation of a highly porous mineral oxide which is silica, alumina, silica-alumina, zirconia or titanium oxide, comprising the steps of:
  - a) impregnating said oxide with a sufficient amount of concentrated orthophosphoric or polyphosphoric acid, then
  - b) drying said oxide at atmospheric pressure at a temperature of between 100 and 200°C for at least 3 hours, and, then,
  - c) calcining said oxide at atmospheric pressure at a temperature of between 200°C and 500°C for at least 2 hours.
16. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 15, wherein the highly porous mineral oxide is a mineral oxide with a pore volume of at least 1 ml/g.
17. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 16, wherein the highly porous mineral oxide is a mineral oxide with a pore volume of at least 3 ml/g.
18. (Cancelled)
19. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 18, wherein the mineral oxide is silica.

20. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 15, wherein, in step a), the sufficient amount of concentrated orthophosphoric or polyphosphoric acid for the impregnation is the maximum amount that it is possible to impregnate on the mineral oxide, which is the volume for which the mineral oxide is no longer capable of absorbing the liquid orthophosphoric or polyphosphoric acid.
21. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 15, wherein the polyphosphoric acid is pyrophosphoric acid, diphosphoric acid of formula  $H_4P_2O_7$ , triphosphoric acid of formula  $H_5P_3O_{10}$ , polyphosphoric acids of formula  $H_{n+2}P_nO_{3n+1}$ , or metaphosphoric acids of formula  $H_nP_nO_{3n}$ .
22. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 21, wherein the polyphosphoric acid used has an  $H_3PO_4$  equivalent of greater than 100.
23. (Previously presented) A process for rendering polymers fire retardant comprising the step of incorporating by mixing an efficient fire retardant amount of an oxide made by the process of claim 15.
24. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the polymers are thermosetting polymers.